

REMARKS

Claims 1-12 are pending and have been rejected. Claims 1, 5, 8, 11 and 12 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Ananda, U.S. Patent No. 5,548,645. Claims 3, 4, 6, 7, 9 and 10 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ananda in view of Kanno, U.S. Patent No. 5,943,650. Reconsideration of the rejections is requested in view of the amendments to the claims and for the following reasons.

The invention is directed to an application service providing method and system which selects applications satisfying user requirements from a plurality of applications provided by a provider or providers and supplies the user with the selected application. Specifically, the present invention provides a business function list of holding applications, inputs function requirements, which are selected from the business function list by a user, supplies application candidates satisfying the input function requirement, and provides service of the applications selected from the application candidates by the user by performing data format conversion between data input by the user and data for the selected applications or communication protocol conversion. In particular, in the present invention, the provider side apparatus executes the applications.

In the cited references of Ananda and Kanno, an application is transferred from a central computer or vendor computer to a remote computer and is executed on the remote computer. In general, the central computer as used in the prior art references corresponds to the provider side apparatus 100 (Fig. 1) according to the present invention, which executes the application. Specifically, in Ananda, a user in a remote location using a personal computer and a modem is able to connect to a central rental facility (central computer), transfer application software from the central rental facility to the remote computer, and execute the application software on the remote computer. The application is executed on the remote computer while being electronically connected to the central rental facility. However, when the communication link between the central and remote computers is interrupted or terminated, the application software no longer executes on the remote computer. This is accomplished according to Ananda, by integrating header software with the application software. See col. 2, lines 54-64 of the reference.

In Kanno, an operation management system manages the operation of a software product. The system includes battery value management means for decrementing a battery value according to the operation amount of the managed software

product. Further, operation limit means limits the operation of the managed software product when the battery value has decreased to a specific limit value. Charge means enables a charge value to be added to the current battery value when the charge value is entered from external means. See col. 2, lines 39-48 of the reference.

As amended, claims 1, 5, 8 and 12 set forth the providing of a user with application services. First, application candidates are supplied that satisfy function requirements input by the user that are selected from a business function list. Then, service of the applications selected from the application candidates is provided by performing data format conversion between the data input by the user and the data for the selected applications or by communication protocol conversion. Therefore, the data which is input by the user is converted to the form matching the application and the converted data is input to the application that is executed on the provider side apparatus. This manner of operation is not shown or suggested by Ananda and Kanno since the central machine in each of these references is not used to execute the applications.

According to the present invention, function requirements which are selected from the business function list by a user are input and application candidates are supplied that satisfy

the input function requirements. Further, with respect to claims 5, system linking means provides application services by performing data conversion between data input by the user and data for the selected applications or by communication protocol conversion. Neither Ananda nor Kanno disclose the claimed application selection from application candidates. Further, neither of these references disclose a system linking means as set forth in claim 5.

Claims 11 and 12 are directed to an intermediary provider in which the function requirements are input by the user and the provider side apparatus handles the application provided by the other application provider as well as the application within the provider side apparatus. Figs. 7 and 8 provides support for the claims and also this aspect of the claimed invention is set forth on page 19, line 25, of the specification, for example. In contrast to the invention set forth in claims 11 and 12, both Ananda and Kanno handle the applications within the central computer or the vendor's machine only, which correspond to a central computer.

In claim 2, Applicants set forth that the application candidates that satisfy the response requirement indicate a response of an application input by the user. That is, the user side apparatus inputs the command data and the provider side apparatus executes the application in response to the

input on the user side apparatus. Further, the provider side apparatus sends the execution result to the user side apparatus. In such a system, the response time depends on the communication speed.

Claims 4, 7 and 10, the information relating to a user name, names of applications contracted with the user, log in names and passwords of the applications are stored in an information table, which is not disclosed by the references. For example, Kanno manages the software product by using a battery value rather than accepting input of a user name and performing log in procedures to the applications corresponding to the input user name, as set forth in claims 4, 7 and 10.

In claims 3, 6 and 9, a change of satisfaction rate is detected and an application satisfying the user requirements is exchanged with another application if an application does not satisfy the user's requirements. On the other hand, in the cited references, when the application is changed, alternative applications are transferred from a central computer or a vendor's machine to the remote computer or user machine.

New claim 13 has been added to describe the tag code list table explained in the specification on page 43, line 8 with reference to Fig. 24, for example. New claim 13 is patentable

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over the references relied upon in the rejections and the remainder of the art of record for the foregoing reasons.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, reconsideration and reexamination are respectfully requested.

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